

RUANG TUNGGU

Rohman masih ingat saat ia melihat tubuhnya terburai dan anggota tubuhnya tersebar ke berbagai penjuru. Ia merekam gambar itu dalam gerakan lambat, dan melihat segalanya dengan jelas; orang-orang yang menjerit histeris, tubuh-tubuh yang jatuh bergelimpangan, darah yang menggenang.

Ia mendapat giliran menjalankan misi suci sehari sebelum tahun baru. Ia merangsek ke dalam kerumunan festival seni jalanan di kota itu lalu meledakkan dirinya. Begitulah perintah yang didapatnya, dan begitulah yang ia laksanakan. Kami dengar maka kami taati, setiap anggota mengerti prinsip itu. Setiap anggota juga paham, akan tiba giliran mereka menjadi 'pengantin'. Pengantin, karena pengorbanan nyawa yang mereka lakukan akan dibalas dengan sambutan dari 72 bidadari surga. Bidadari-bidadari yang sopan, yang menundukkan pandangannya, yang tidak pernah disentuh oleh manusia dan tidak pula oleh jin. Bidadari yang seindah permata. Wanita-wanita muda tercantik yang terlihat bagaikan anggur merah pada gelas putih. Itulah yang akan menjadi mempelai mereka. Bayangan itu selalu membuat Rohman berseri karena gairah.

Namun saat ini, ia hanya menemui ruang kosong yang begitu luas, sehingga tepi ruangan tampak tak begitu jelas di matanya. Dia duduk di sebuah kursi, sendiri dalam kelengangan. Dan itulah yang ia lakukan, entah sudah berapa lama. Ia tidak merasakan apa-apa, tapi sekaligus merasakan segalanya. Ia tidak menunggu, tapi juga sekaligus merasa ingin tahu. Ia bisa bebas bergerak kemanapun yang ia inginkan, tapi juga tidak ingin beranjak kemana-mana. Segalanya seperti sulit untuk dijelaskan. Ia merasa, ini adalah dimensi yang berbeda dengan dimensi kehidupannya di dunia, tapi ia sendiri merasa belum bisa sepenuhnya membebaskan diri dari dunia. Jadi ia hanya menunggu, dan menunggu. Dan menunggu.

Sampai kemudian ia melihat ada titik dari kejauhan mengarah pasti menuju padanya. Titik itu semakin lama semakin jelas bentuknya, berjalan dengan ritme tetap, dan semakin besar. Semakin jelas sosoknya, yang ternyata seorang perempuan. Rambutnya lurus tergerai sebahu, ia tidak menutup kepala. Rohman ingat salah satu cerita yang pernah didengarnya di dunia, bahwa perempuan-perempuan di surga memang tidak berhijab. Tapi perempuan ini kelihatan terlalu normal, terlalu biasa.

Ia cukup manis, berkacamata, mengenakan rok span, dengan kemeja berlengan panjang yang digulung sebatas siku. Ia tidak kelihatan mewah. Tidak mengenakan sutera hijau seperti gambaran-gambaran tentang bidadari. Semakin dekat perempuan itu, semakin Rohman mengambil kesimpulan, dia bukanlah bidadari. Pasti bukan. Tiba-tiba ia dilanda kejengkelan, seperti perasaan orang yang tidak sabar menunggu, dan tidak tahu sampai kapan ia harus menunggu. Dimana bidadari-bidadariku? Aku mau bidadariku. Ingin rasanya Rohman mengentak-hentakkan kakinya, tapi ia gengsi, nanti diledek, kok seperti kanak-kanak yang dongkol karena minta mainan dan tak dipenuhi ayah bundanya.

“Selamat datang di Ruang Tunggu,” kata perempuan itu begitu berada di hadapannya. Suaranya dalam, juga merdu. Ia duduk di kursi yang sama bentuk dan rupanya dengan kursi yang Rohman duduki, meskipun sebelumnya Rohman tidak melihat ada kursi di depannya. Apakah kursi itu dari tadi berada di sini? Pikir Rohman bingung. Ia menatap perempuan di depannya dengan penuh tanda tanya. Di dunia, ia akan cenderung memalingkan pandangan demi berhadapan dengan perempuan seperti ini, apalagi ia tidak berhijab. Namun saat ini ia tidak merasa itu perlu. Ia hanya ingin bertanya, tapi mulutnya enggan terbuka. Perempuan di hadapannya hanya menatap lurus, dengan ekspresi muka yang sulit diterka. Seperti tersenyum, tapi bukan. Antara sikap menantang, meledek, bangga, sedih, tapi juga kesombongan. Entahlah, Rohman hanya tidak bisa berhenti menatap perempuan itu, juga karena hanya dia lah yang ada di hadapan untuk dipandang.

Kemudian mereka berdua hanya saling diam saja, saling berpandangan. Perempuan itu kemudian mengeluarkan rokok, menyalakan, dan mulai menghisapnya. Rohman semakin bingung. Bukankah ini seharusnya akhirat? Bagaimana mungkin ada rokok di akhirat? Dan ia paling benci asap rokok. Ia paling benci juga pada perempuan yang merokok. Dan perempuan itu seperti tahu Rohman membencinya, malah dengan sengaja mengembus-embuskan asapnya ke wajah Rohman. Aroma kretek yang persis sama dengan di warung Marto langganannya dulu. Ini semua semakin tidak masuk akal. Rohman merasakan kemarahannya memuncak.

“Siapa kamu? Di mana saya? Di mana bidadari-bidadari saya?” Rohman merasakan suaranya menggelegar dan bergetar. Perempuan itu kemudian terkikik geli. “Selamat datang di Ruang Tunggu,” ulangnya lagi, kali ini dengan intonasi yang berbeda. Lebih menggoda.

“Kejutan! Tidak ada mempelai. Tidak ada bidadari. Tidak ada sorak sorai pesta penyambutan. Hanya ada kamu, di ruang tunggu. Dan untuk sekarang, saya,” ujar perempuan itu tenang.

“Tidak mungkin! Saya sudah dijanjikan 72 bidadari! Mereka wanita-wanita muda cantik yang bening, yang sopan, yang menundukkan pandangannya, yang tidak pernah disentuh oleh manusia dan tidak pula oleh jin. Dan saya yang akan memerawani mereka siang dan malam tanpa henti, tanpa lelah, tanpa pernah lemas, tanpa pernah kehilangan syahwat!”

Lagi-lagi perempuan itu terkikik geli, tidak menjawab, terus saja mengembus-embuskan asap rokoknya dengan gaya yang membuat Rohman muak. Ingin rasanya ia menampar perempuan itu. Ia pantang memukul perempuan, hanya lelaki pengecut yang memukul perempuan, demikian prinsipnya sejak dulu. Tapi terhadap perempuan ini rasanya ia tidak lagi memiliki kesabaran.

“Katakan di mana bidadari-bidadariku, “ ujarnya dengan nada mengancam, sambil berdiri menghadap perempuan itu. Tangannya terayun, sedikit lagi akan menghajar wajah si perempuan, meski sebetulnya ia masih ingin menahan diri. Perempuan itu setegar benteng, matanya menatap Rohman tenang, tanpa berkedip. Ia terus saja mengisap rokoknya, kemudian mengembuskannya. Dan Rohman baru tersadar bahwa rokok itu tak kunjung memendek sedari tadi, ukuran dan bentuknya tetap sama, dan terus menyala.

“Tidak ada bidadari. Tidak pernah ada. Dan tidak akan ada.” “Bagaimana mungkin?” pekik Rohman “Mengapa tidak?” kali ini perempuan itu yang balas berteriak, sambil berdiri dan menantang wajah Rohman.

“Apakah kamu kira kamu layak mendapatkan segala keindahan dan kebahagiaan setelah membunuh begitu banyak orang tak berdosa di dunia? “

“Ya, tentu!”

“Karena?”

“Karena saya menjalankan misi suci. Saya memperjuangkan kepentingan yang lebih besar dari diri mereka, dari diri saya sendiri, dari semua orang.”

“Meh... “ perempuan itu mencibir.

“Keadilan di muka bumi, pembalasan pada pihak yang telah menghancurkan agama dan umat!”

“Dengan mengorbankan nyawa orang-orang yang tidak berdosa?”

“Ah semua orang itu berdosa juga kok! Toh mereka berpesta dan minum alkohol!”

Perempuan itu tertawa terbahak-bahak. Lalu dengan gerakan seperti memetik dari udara, ia mengambil sebotol minuman, menenggaknya. Rohman

merampasnya dengan murka. Tapi tangannya tidak dapat menyentuh apa-apa. Aneh, padahal hidungnya masih dapat mencium aromanya.

“Arrrrgh! Arrrrgh! Arrrrgh!” Rohman berteriak keras. Ia meremas rambutnya dengan kalut. Ini tidak mungkin terjadi. Tidak mungkin. Bagaimana mungkin? Apakah mungkin? Bagaimana jika mungkin?

Ia kembali berteriak-teriak, sepuasnya, sekuatnya. Ia ingin mengeluarkan segala kebingungan, kemarahan, ketidakmenentuan yang ia rasakan. Dan ia terus berteriak, entah untuk berapa lama dengan mata yang menyipit lalu terpejam. Ia hanya terus berteriak dan terus berteriak. Entah untuk berapa lama, ia tidak tahu. Ia kemudian berhenti begitu saja. Bukan karena lelah atau haus, tapi lebih karena jemu. Dan ketika ia membuka mata, perempuan itu masih ada di hadapannya. Menatapnya dengan raut wajah dan posisi duduk yang sama. Rohman sangat ingin mencekiknya.

“Kau bilang tadi ini Ruang Tunggu?”

“Ya.”

“Lalu apa setelah ini?”

“Saya tidak akan memberitahu, itu bukan tugas saya.”

“Berilah petunjuk, sedikit saja!”

“Saya sudah memberitahu apa yang kamu perlu tahu. Tidak akan ada bidadari untukmu.” “Lalu ada apa?”

Lagi-lagi perempuan itu tertawa. Nadanya kali ini lebih bersahabat daripada meledek.

“Kalau saya cerita memangnya kamu percaya? Selama ini kan kamu percaya pada guru-gurumu itu. Nah ternyata kamu dikibuli. Titik. Kamu cuma dimanfaatkan saja, dibodoh-bodohi. Mereka itu belum pernah berkunjung kemana-mana selain berputar-putar di pikiran sesat mereka sendiri, boro-boro sampai di Ruang Tunggu seperti kamu.”

“Brengsek! Brengsek! Brengsek” maki Rohman. Kemudian kembali menangis. Lalu berguling-guling, menendang-nendang, memukul-mukul, terus menerus melakukannya, terus menerus, tanpa merasa lelah.

Tapi setelah entah berapa lama, akhirnya ia merasa jemu. Ia kembali duduk berhadapan dengan perempuan itu, yang masih menatapnya dengan raut muka dan posisi duduk yang sama. Batang rokoknya tidak memendek, dan asapnya terus mengembuskan aroma kretek.

“Kamu bohong kan? Ini toh hanya Ruang Tunggu. Pasti akan ada bidadari saya setelah ini kan? Saya sudah mengorbankan segalanya.. Segala-galanya. Menjauhi orang tua, keluarga, teman-teman, menjadi orang yang berbeda dan kehilangan mereka semua,” air mata Rohman kembali berlinang.

“Saya kadang merasa lelah, juga merasa bersalah, saya juga membayangkan orang-orang baik yang terkena dampaknya hanya karena mereka kebetulan berada di sana. Dan walaupun mereka minum alkohol, mereka tidak sepatutnya mendapat hukuman seberat itu. Saya juga sering merasa takut, tapi guru-guru selalu menguatkan saya, ada kehidupan abadi setelah dunia. Ada keindahan abadi.. ada bidadari...” Rohman menangis sesenggukan. Menggerung-gerung.

“Bilang pada saya semua itu akan ada, katakan pada saya ada bidadari! Bukan perempuan seperti kamu, yang sombong, merokok, sok tahu! Saya mau bidadari saya, “ kini Rohman merengek seperti kanak-kanak.

“Seperti apa saya sekarang, hanyalah cerminan dari sesuatu yang tidak kamu sukai,” jawab perempuan itu tenang. “Tapi seperti apa saya juga tidak akan mengubah apapun untuk kamu kan?”

Rohman menatap perempuan itu, dan merasa heran karena mukanya berangsur-angsur berubah menjadi seperti ibunya. Rohman membelalak, air mata terus membanjiri wajahnya. Lalu wajah perempuan itu berubah lagi menjadi guru kesayangannya ketika sekolah dasar, kemudian perlahan berubah lagi menjadi wajah ibunya, lalu berubah lagi menjadi wajah ibunya, kemudian wajah perempuan yang pernah hendak dilamarnya, lalu wajah yang tidak dikenalnya. Terus berubah dan berganti-ganti.

Perempuan-perempuan itu menatapnya dengan wajah sedih, sambil terus berkata, “Tidak ada bidadari, Rohman. Tidak akan ada bidadari untukmu. “ Rohman lalu membentur-benturkan kepalanya. Terus menerus. Terus menerus. Tanpa merasa sakit. Tanpa merasa lelah.

The Waiting Room

Rohman still recalled the moment his guts had spilled out of his body and his legs and arms were scattered all over the place, when he had detonated the bomb attached to his chest. His mind recorded those images in slow motion, and he saw everything crystal clear; people screaming hysterically, bodies falling all around, and blood collecting into puddles.

He'd had his turn to carry out the holy mission one day before the New Year. He'd pushed his way into the crowd of a street art festival in the town then blown himself up. That had been the order he'd received, and that was exactly what he'd done. We listen therefore we obey, every member understood that principle.

Every member also understood that his turn to be 'a groom' would eventually come, because for sacrificing their lives they would be rewarded with 72 maidens in heaven. Well-mannered maidens, who lowered their eyes, and who had never been touched by human or djinn. Maidens as beautiful as diamonds. The most beautiful young women who looked like red wine in a clear glass. Those maidens would be their brides. And that idea had always made him come alive with desire.

But now, he found only an empty room, so vast that he couldn't really see the end of it clearly. He sat on a chair in his loneliness. And that was the only thing he did, unaware of time. He didn't feel anything, but at the same time he felt everything. He wasn't waiting for anything, but he was also curious. He could move to any place he wanted, but he didn't want to move anywhere. Everything seemed too difficult to explain. He felt that this was a different dimension than the one he had lived in, in the world, but he felt like he couldn't yet free himself completely from the world.

So he waited, and waited. And waited.

Until he saw a dot, definitely coming toward him from a far. That dot was slowly taking shape, walking at a constant pace, and getting bigger. It was turning into a clearer figure, which was a woman. Her hair was straight, down to her shoulders; she was not wearing a headscarf. Rohman remembered a story he once had heard in the world, that indeed the women in heaven did not wear headscarves. But this one looked too normal, too ordinary. She was pretty enough, with glasses, wearing a pencil skirt, her shirt's long sleeves were rolled up to her elbows. She didn't look glamorous. She wasn't wearing green silk like descriptions of the heavenly maidens.

The closer she got, the closer Rohman came to a conclusion. She was definitely not one of the maidens. She couldn't be. Suddenly, he grew aggravated, like the feeling of a person who is impatient with waiting, but doesn't know how much longer he has to wait. Where are my maidens? I want my maidens. Rohman felt like stomping his feet on the ground like a kid, sulking because he couldn't get the toys he wanted from his parents.

"Welcome to The Waiting Room," said that woman once she was in front of him.

Her voice was deep, as well as melodic. She sat on a chair in the same shape and form as the chair Rohman sat on, even though before, Rohman hadn't seen a single chair in front of him. Had that chair been here all along? Rohman was thinking in confusion. He stared at the woman before him with a head full of questions. In the world, he would've lowered his gaze when facing this kind of woman, let alone as she was not wearing a headscarf. But now he didn't feel it was necessary to do so. He only wanted to ask, but his mouth was unwilling to open.

The woman before him stared straight ahead, with an unfathomable expression. She seemed to be smiling, but she wasn't. Her attitude was something between daring, teasing, proud, sad, but arrogant as well. He didn't know why but Rohman just couldn't take his eyes off her—and because she happened to be the only object in front of him to stare at.

Then the two of them were silent, staring into each other's eyes. She took out a cigarette, lighted it, and started to inhale. Rohman was even more puzzled. Wasn't this supposed to be the afterlife? How could there be cigarettes in the afterlife? And cigarette smoke was something he hated the most. He also hated women who smoked.

Seemingly aware that Rohman hated the smoke, she intentionally blew it in his face. He was surrounded by the scent of clove cigarettes, just like the ones found on earth. None of this made any sense. Rohman felt his anger growing.

"Who are you? Where am I? Where are my virgins?" Rohman felt his voice thundering and trembling.

Then that woman giggled in amusement.

"Welcome to The Waiting Room," she repeated, this time with a different tone. More teasing.

"Surprise! No brides. No virgins. No cheery welcoming party. Only you, in the waiting room. And for now, me," said the woman calmly.

"It's impossible! I was promised 72 virgins! They are beautiful young women who are lovely and well-mannered, who lower their gaze, who have never been touched by humans or *jinn*s. And I am the one who will take their virginities, all day and all night without stopping, without being exhausted, without ever being weak, nor losing my desire!"

Again, the woman giggled, without answering, only blowing her smoke with a flair that made Rohman sick. He felt like slapping that woman. But he refused to. Only a cowardly man slaps a woman; that had been his principle. But for this woman, he felt like he no longer had any patience.

"Tell me, where are my virgins?" he said in a threatening tone, rising to face the woman. His hand swung, very close to slapping her, even though he still wanted to control himself.

This woman was tough, her eyes stared at Rohman calmly, without blinking. She continued smoking her cigarette, then blew out its smoke. And Rohman realized that the cigarette had not become any shorter. Its size and shape were still the same, and it stayed lit.

"No virgins. Never have been. Never will be."

"How come?" cried Rohman.

"Why not?" this time, it was her turn to shout, rising to challenge Rohman. "Do you think you deserve beauty and happiness after killing so many innocent people in the world?"

"Yes, of course!"

"Why?"

"Because I accomplished a holy mission. I fought for an interest that is greater than them, than myself, than everyone."

"Wah...," she sneered.

"For justice on earth, to avenge those who have destroyed religion and its congregations!"

"By sacrificing the lives of innocent people?"

"Oh, they were full of sins! They partied and drank alcohol!"

The woman burst out laughing. Then by moving her fingers as if picking it out of the empty air, she grabbed a bottle of liquor and drank it. Rohman grabbed it

angrily. But his hand was unable to touch anything. Strange, even though his nose could still smell its aroma.

“Arrrgh! Arrrgh! Arrrgh!” Rohman screamed loudly. He grasped his hair frantically. This cannot be happening. Impossible. How come? Is it even possible? What if it is possible? He screamed again, as hard and as loud as he could. He wanted to release all of the confusion, anger, and insecurity that he felt. And he kept screaming for God knows how long, his eyes were narrowing, then completely shut. He kept screaming and screaming.

No one knew how long it was, neither did he. Then he stopped, all of a sudden. Not because he was tired or thirsty, but because he was bored. And when he opened his eyes, that woman was still in front of him. She stared at him sitting in the same position and with the exact same expression.

Rohman really wanted to choke her.

“You said before that this is The Waiting Room?”

“Yes.”

“Then what comes after this?”

“I won’t tell you, it’s not my job.”

“Give me a clue, just a little!”

“I’ve told you what you need to know. There are no virgins for you.”

“Then what would there be?”

Again the woman laughed. Her tone was friendlier than mocking now. “If I tell you, will you even believe it? All this time you only believed your teachers, that there are virgins in heaven. Now it appears that you were fooled. Period. You were used, fooled around with. They have never been anywhere beyond their misguided minds, let alone in The Waiting Room like you.”

“Damn it! Damn it! Damn it!” Rohman cursed. Then he went back to crying. Then rolling around, kicking, punching, over and over again, without feeling tired. But after a long while, finally he got bored. He sat back in front of the woman, who still stared at him with the exact same expression and sitting position. Her cigarette wasn’t getting shorter and its smoke was spreading the scent of cloves.

“You’re lying, aren’t you? This is only The Waiting Room. Maidens must be waiting for me somewhere, right? I have sacrificed everything.... Every damn

thing! Leaving my parents, my family, friends, becoming a different person and losing them all," his eyes were brimming with tears again.

"Sometimes I felt tired, and guilty, too. I imagined the innocent people who were affected only because they were there by accident. And even though they drank alcohol, they were not supposed to be punished that severely. I often felt afraid, but the teachers were there to keep me strong, there would be an eternal life after this world. An eternal beauty... there would be virgins..."

Rohman cried uncontrollably. He growled.

"Tell me that all of it will come, tell me that the virgins do exist! Not a woman like you who is arrogant, smokes, a know-it-all woman! I want my virgins," now Rohman whined like a child.

"What I am now, is only a reflection of things you hate," she replied coolly. "But what I am now won't change anything for you, right?"

Rohman stared at the woman, and felt astonished because her face was slowly turning into his mother's face. Rohman glared, his tears flooded his face. Then the woman's face changed again into his favorite grade school teacher's, after that slowly shifting into his sister's, then again turning into his mother's, after that into the face of a woman to whom he was about to propose, then into a face he didn't recognize. It kept changing and switching.

Those women stared at him sadly, while they kept on saying, "There are no virgins, Rohman. No virgins for you."

Rohman then began banging his head. Again and again. Over and over again. Without feeling pain. Without feeling tired. ***